

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

July 18, 2011

The Honorable Janet Napolitano
Secretary, Department of Homeland Security
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Washington, DC 20528

The Honorable Eric H. Holder, Jr.
Attorney General, Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20530

The Honorable Robert S. Mueller, III
Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation
935 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20535

Dear Secretary Napolitano, Attorney General Holder and Director Mueller:

We are writing subsequent to a hearing of the House Subcommittee on Counterterrorism and Intelligence, on which we serve, entitled "Hezbollah in Latin America – Implications for U.S. Homeland Security".

As new members of the Committee, we found the hearing to be informative on Hezbollah's activities beyond Lebanon, an issue which does not receive a great deal of public attention. As Western New Yorkers, we found the testimony that Hezbollah has established a presence in Toronto, a city which lies just over 100 miles from Buffalo, to be of great concern.

Western New York is home to four international bridge crossings, the largest electricity producer in New York State, and the homegrown al-Qaeda terrorist cell, the Lackawanna Six. It sits along two Great Lakes which represent the largest fresh water supply in the world and is the center point of a 500 mile radius that includes approximately 55% of the U.S. population and 62% of the Canadian population. The growing presence of an organization like Hezbollah on our proverbial doorstep is reason for concern.

We would like to respectfully request that you examine the record of our July 7 hearing and offer the perspectives of your respective departments on the threat to Western New York specifically and American homeland generally posed by the increasing presence of Hezbollah in Toronto and in cities across North America. We have requested that the Chairman King and Subcommittee Chairman Meehan of the Committee on Homeland Security hold a hearing on this topic with your agencies and we look forward to your participation should a hearing be called or in the alternative, at the briefing we have requested.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. We look forward to working with you on this issue.

Sincerely,


Brian Higgins
Member of Congress


Kathleen Hochul
Member of Congress